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John M. Barten, Director of Natural Resources Management, Three Rivers  
Park District; 12615 County Road 9 – Suite 100; Plymouth, MN 55441-1248  
763-694-7841; Cell Phone: 612-490-1320; [jbarten@threeriversparkdistrict.org](mailto:jbarten@threeriversparkdistrict.org)

In 2004, Minnesota implemented a phosphorus lawn fertilizer restriction to reduce phosphorus loading to lakes and rivers. Six small residential sub-watersheds were monitored from 2001 to 2006 to characterize residential runoff and track changes in phosphorus concentration and export associated with the use of phosphorus free fertilizer. The study design utilized a paired-watershed approach where three of the sub-watersheds were located in the city of Plymouth, Minnesota where the use of lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus was restricted in 1999, (treatment watersheds); the remaining three sub-watersheds were located in Maple Grove, Minnesota where phosphorus fertilizer restrictions were not initiated until 2004, (control watersheds). Study results showed a reduction of approximately 12% in phosphorus runoff from using phosphorus free fertilizer.

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